

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Following the amendments, claims 20-22 and 25-32 are pending in the application, with claim 27 being in independent format.

Claims 11, 12, 14-16, 23 and 24 have been cancelled from the application, and claims 25 and 26 have been amended to depend from claims 32 and 31, respectively.

It is urged that support for all the above amendments can be found throughout the application as originally filed and that none of the amendments constitute new matter or raise new issues for consideration.

Claim rejections under 35 USC §102(b) and §103(a)

Claims 11, 12, 14-16 and 23-26 stand finally rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 2,484,391 to Treiss Jr., and/or §103(a) as being unpatentable over various combinations of Treiss Jr., US 2001/0028007 to Michel, and US Patent 4,417,512 to Engelke. While applicant does not agree with the Examiner's position, in order to expedite issuance of claims indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, claims 11, 12, 14-16, 23 and 24 have been cancelled from the application and claims 25 and 26 have been amended to depend from claims 32 and 31, respectively. It is submitted that, following entry of the above amendments, the rejections under 35 USC §102(b) and §103(a) may be properly withdrawn.

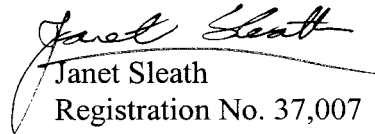
Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 20-22 and 27-32 are allowed.

Concluding Remarks

Every effort has been made to put the pending claims in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early allowance of all the pending claims is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any further concerns regarding this application, she is requested to telephone the undersigned at 206.382.1191.

Respectfully submitted,


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